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<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4283-4356> (2017) Rehabilitating the athlete not just the injury: Psychological aspects of running injury rehabilitation. In: Running 2017, 22nd March 2017, Kettering. (Unpublished)

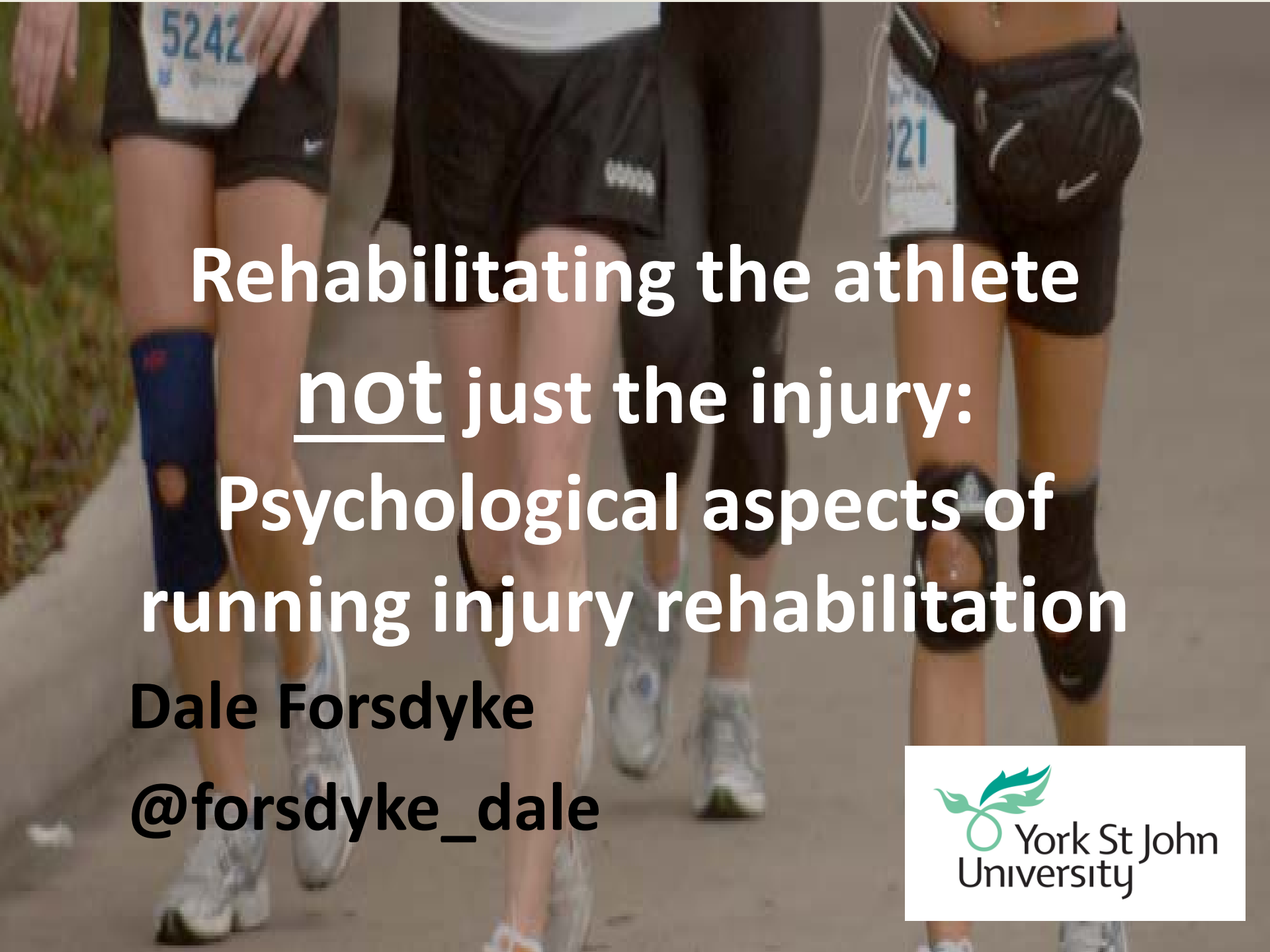
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A background image showing the lower legs and knees of three runners. The runner on the left is wearing a blue brace on their right knee and has a race bib with the number 5242. The runner in the middle is wearing black shorts. The runner on the right is wearing a black brace on their right knee and has a race bib with the number 121.


# Rehabilitating the athlete not just the injury: Psychological aspects of running injury rehabilitation

**Dale Forsdyke**

**@forsdyke\_dale**

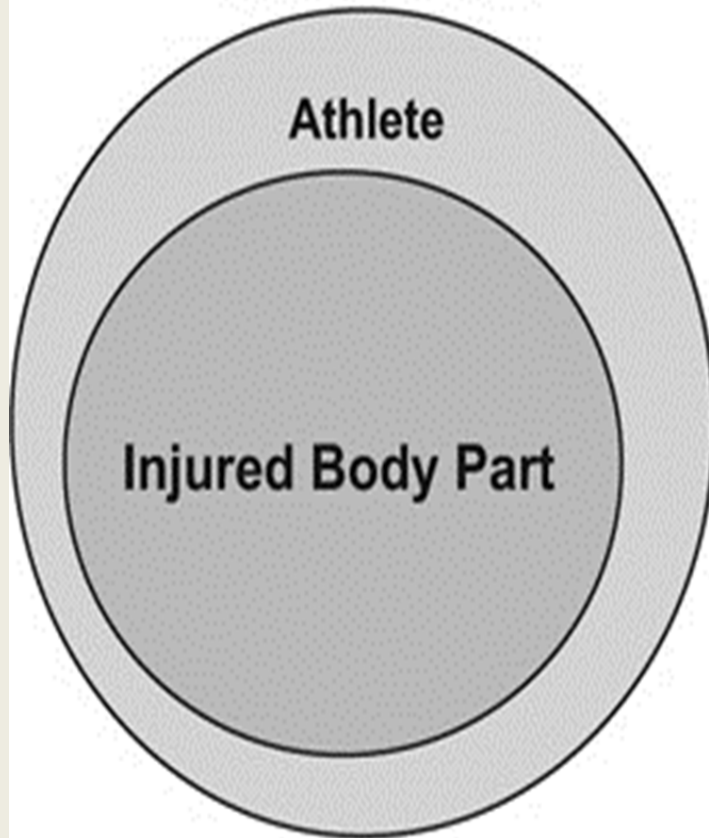
**Warning!**

**I am not a  
psychologist**

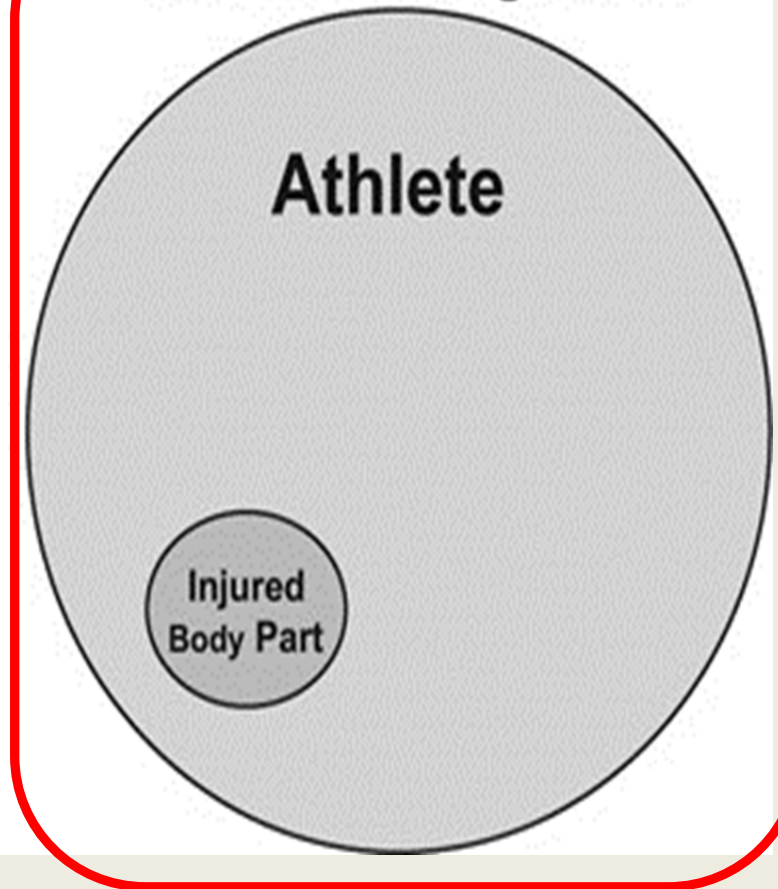
A yellow triangular warning sign with a black exclamation mark in the center. The sign is slightly tilted and has a subtle drop shadow. The text "Warning!" is at the top, and "I am not a psychologist" is written across the middle of the sign.

**It's about the athlete, not the 'specific' injury**

**Rehab Focus**

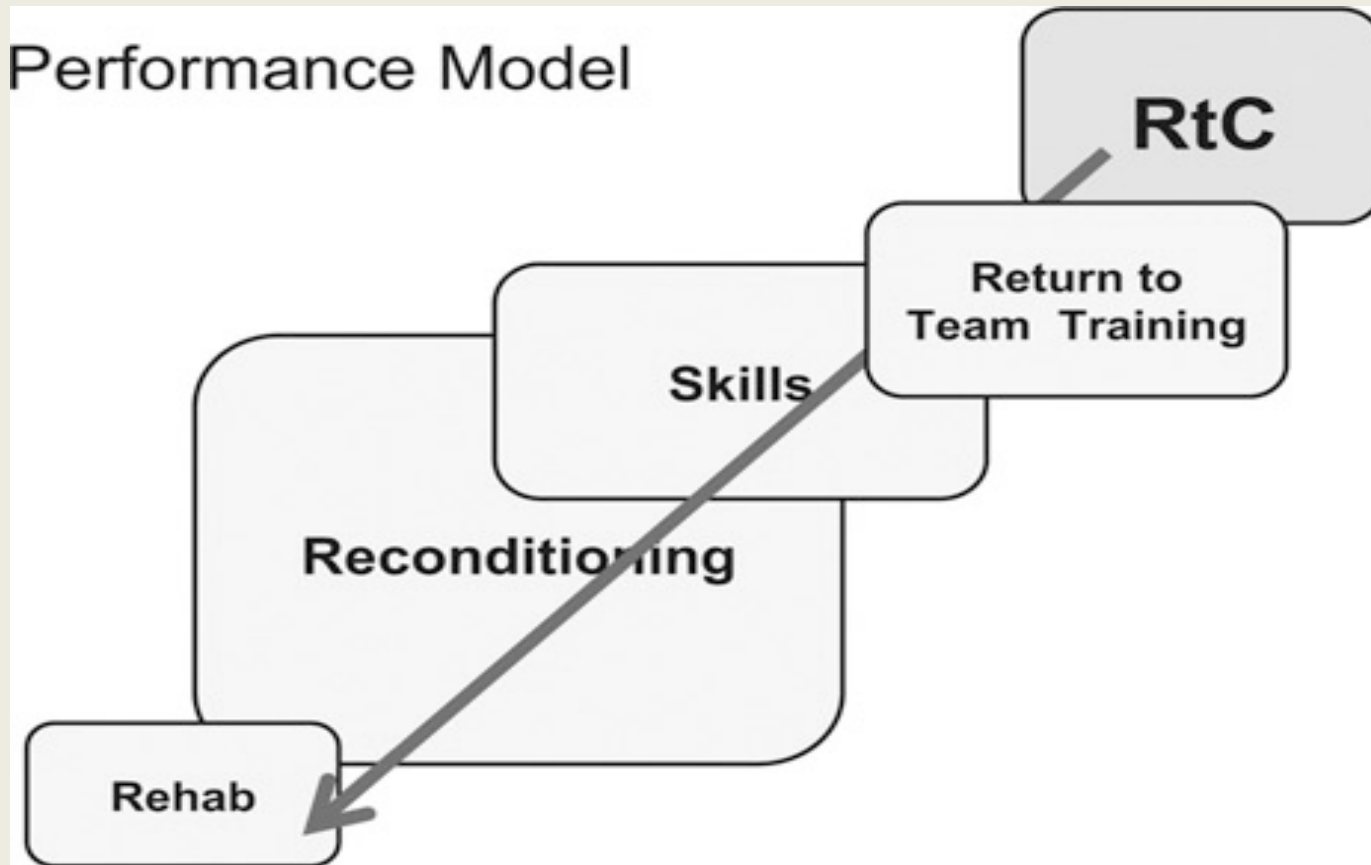


**Reconditioning Focus**



**Knowles (2016)**

# What can they do vs what can't they do



Knowles (2016)


# The problematic injury landscape

- High injury rate in runners 19.4-92.4% (van Gent et al. 2007) **2 out of every 3** athletes (Jacobsson et al. 2013)
- High re-injury rates from common injuries e.g. HSI 12-48% (Liu et al. 2012), ACLR 23% (Paterno et al. 2010) Achilles tendinopathy 27% (Gajhede-Knudsen et al. 2013)
- Return to sport rates from injury is poor in both short and long term 45-83% (Ardern et al. 2012; Fältstrom et al. 2015; Lai et al. 2017)
- Return to pre injury performance rates are poor 40-65% (Ardern et al. 2012; Shah et al. 2010; Waldén et al. 2016)
- Psychosocial as much as physical factors are associated with injury outcomes across a number of common injuries e.g. **motivation, satisfied with function, kinesiophobia, SE, level of education, SS** (Chester et al. 2016; Fältstrom et al. 2015; Forsdyke et al. 2016; Mallow et al. 2016; Sonesson et al. 2015).



# What we can expect to see when working with injured athletes?



A photograph of a group of runners at a marathon finish line. The runners are wearing white t-shirts with blue and purple designs, and some are wearing purple shorts. They are hugging each other in a group hug. In the background, there is a banner that says "PURPLESTRIDE" and "FINISH".

**Social support**

**Are you a buffer or  
an amplifier?**



“...in the end I got a little bit **embarrassed** about how much I was getting injured and things like that so you’d maybe just **not really wanna speak** about it an awful lot...I was becoming a bit of a stuck record...the **communication** wasn’t great between the manager and physio em so sometimes I don’t even think either of them knew...**I don’t cry easy** and things like that but just the **anger** sometimes that I would feel, like how **frustrated** I feel...I just **couldn’t see any positive situation** coming out of it and didn’t have the **motivation** to do it”

Excerpt from interview with an international athlete  
recently retired through training error injury



Together We Are Limitless

Even upon return to  
sport athletes can  
feel isolated

(Forsdyke et al. 2016; Tracey, 2002)

Athletes should be physically,  
psychosocially, technically,  
and tactically ready to return to  
competition

(Forsdyke, Smith, Jones & Gledhill, 2016)

# Key elements in making decisions over psychological readiness to RTS

(Forsdyke, Gledhill & Ardern, 2016)

Characteristics of an athlete who is psychologically ready to RTS are multifaceted

and include, among others: realistic expectations, high levels of self-efficacy and low levels of anxiety (performance and re-injury)

#1 Use tools to monitor injured athletes

#2 Use your working knowledge of the athlete

#3 The need for athlete-centred interdisciplinary shared decision-making

# Psychological Readiness to Return to Sport Scale (Glazer, 2009)

## PSYCHOLOGICAL READINESS TO RETURN TO SPORT SCALE

Please rate your confidence to return to your sport on a scale from 0 - 100.

0 = no confidence at all

50 = moderate confidence

100 = complete confidence

1. My overall confidence to play is \_\_\_\_\_
2. My confidence to play without pain is \_\_\_\_\_
3. My confidence to give 100% effort is \_\_\_\_\_
4. My confidence to not concentrate on the injury is \_\_\_\_\_
5. My confidence in the injured body part to handle to demands of the situation is \_\_\_\_\_
6. My confidence in my skill level/ability is \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

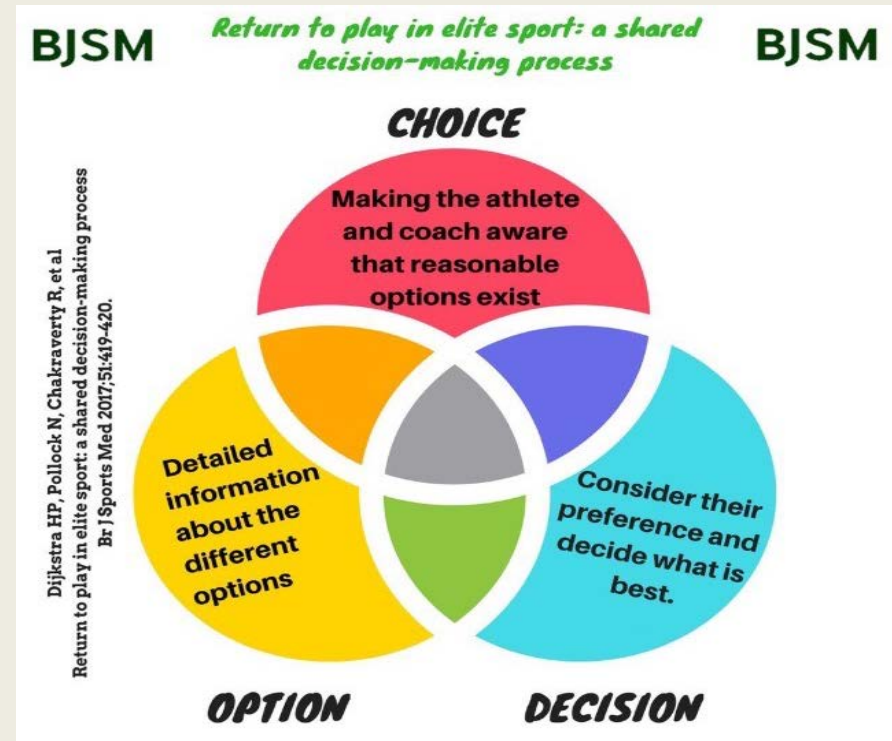
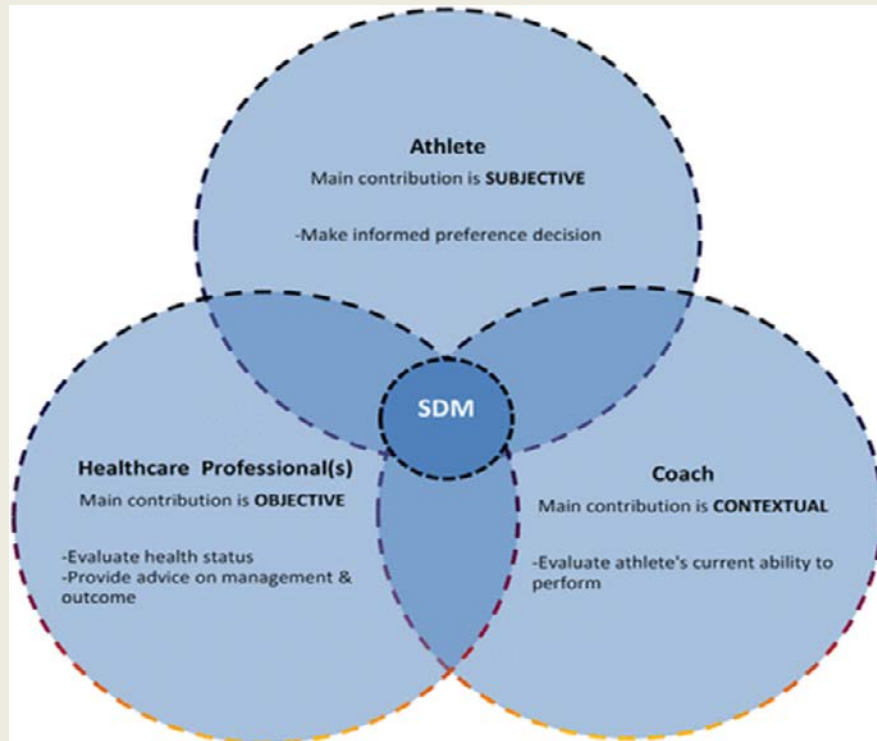
Add total and divide by 10 = \_\_\_\_\_

Scores between 50 and 60 suggest the athlete is psychologically ready to return to sports. Scores below 50 suggest that the athlete may not be ready psychologically to return to sports and needs more time to recover.

**Prone to socially desirable answers?**

# Decisions about the athlete should athlete centred and involve all stakeholders

(see Ardern et al. 2016, Dijkstra et al. 2016)

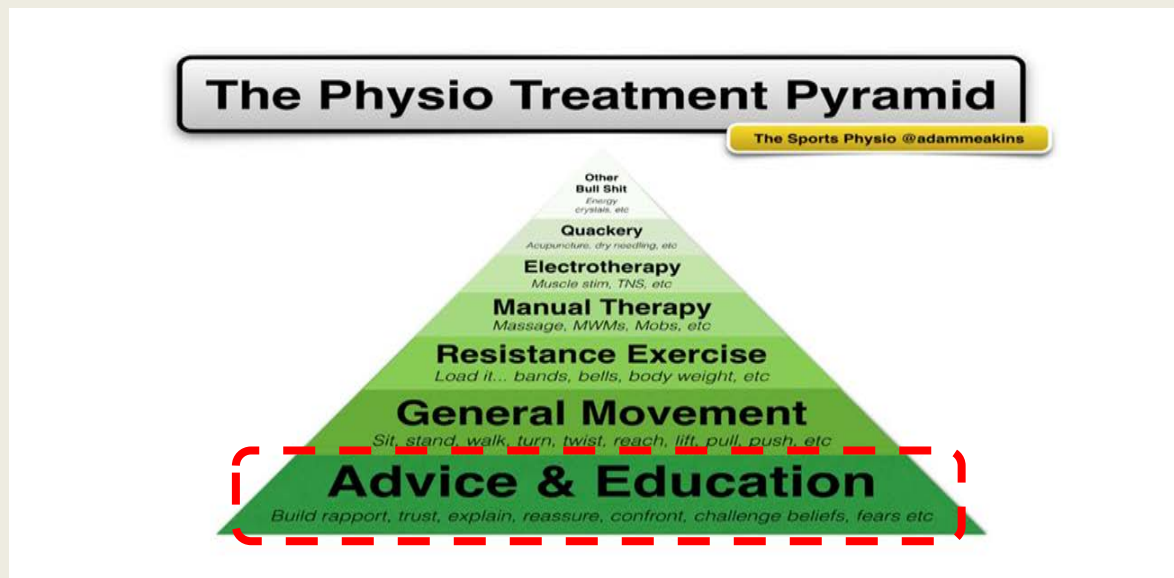


Dijkstra et al. 2016

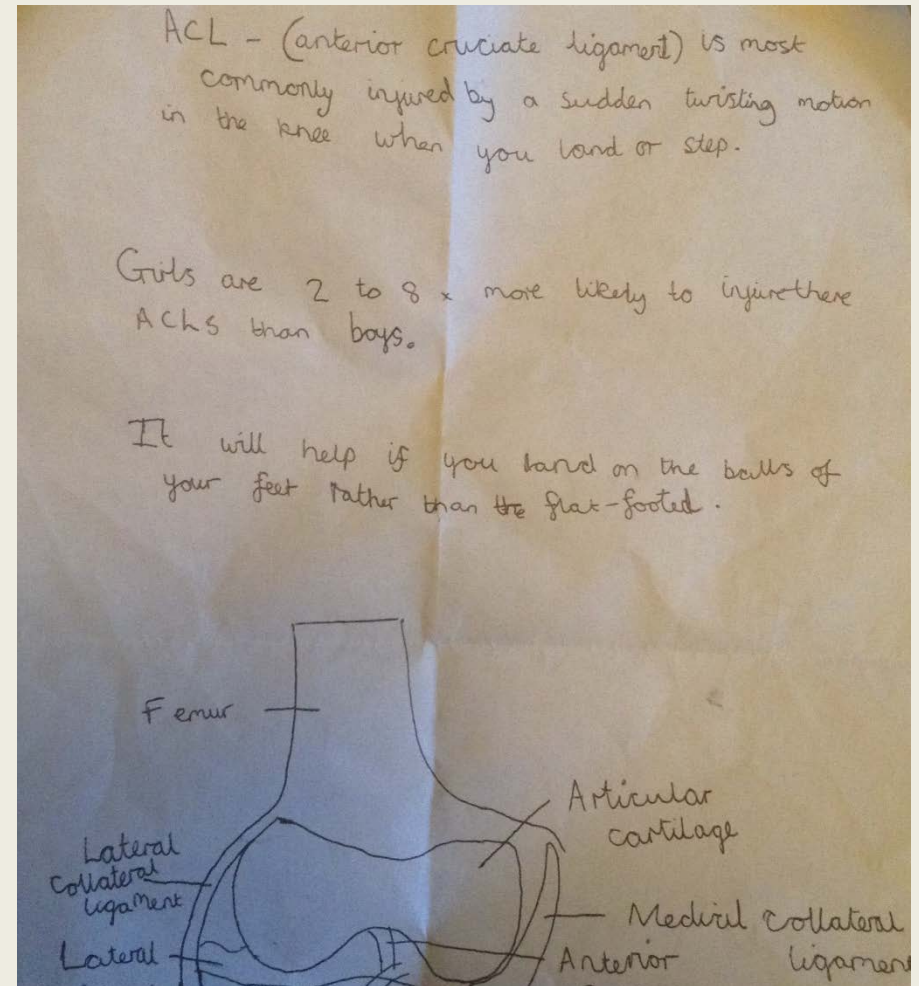
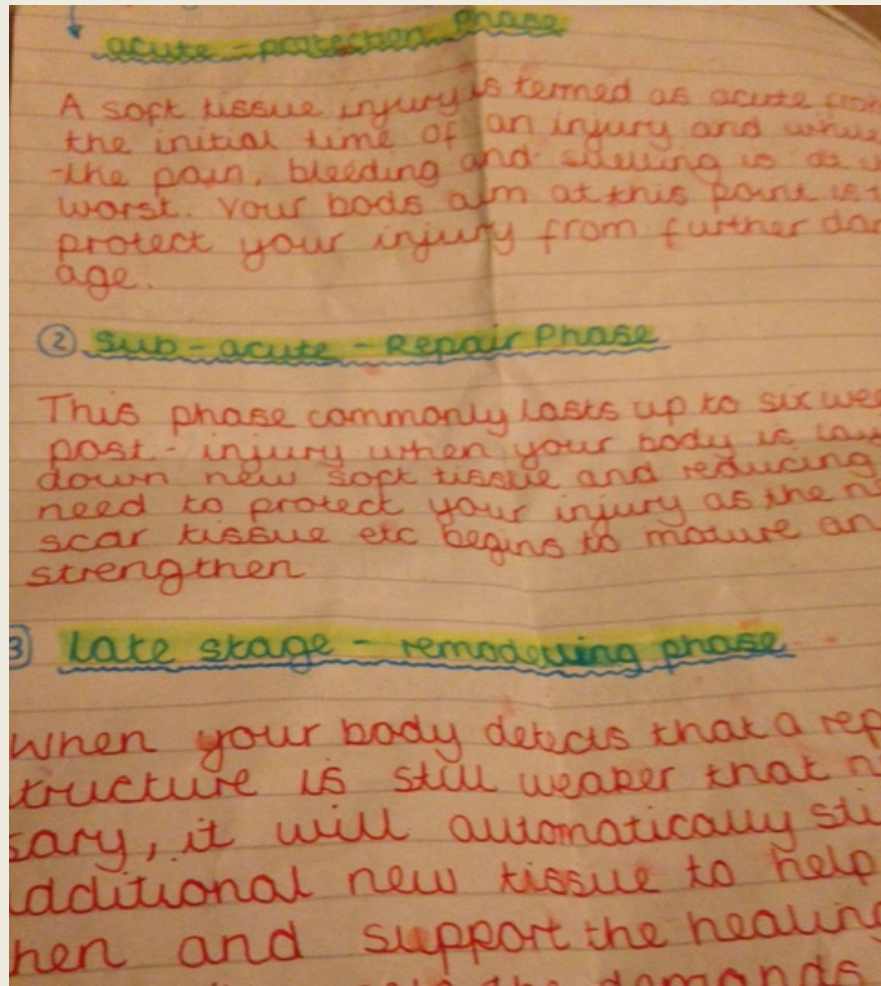


# Empower your athlete!

Only an empowered athlete can positively contribute to shared decision making about their injury



# Practical examples: 13 year old female athlete with MCL injury/ 12 year old with stress fracture 5<sup>th</sup> metatarsal





**Sports injury should  
provide a learning  
experience for the**

**athlete AND practitioner**

# The power of the plenary

ABILITY --- 35% 65% --- EFFORT

What have we  
learnt about your  
injury today?



# A rallying cry

**YOU** are ideally situated to  
recognise, address, and if  
necessary refer on physical  
**AND psychosocial factors**

(see Brewer, 2010; Forsdyke et al. 2016; Heaney  
et al. 2015)

**A CLEAN HOUSE  
IS A SIGN OF AN  
INJURED RUNNER**

**Any  
questions ?**





# Selected useful further reading

- Forsdyke D, Gledhill A, Ardern C. Psychological readiness to return to sport: three key elements to help the practitioner decide whether the athlete is REALLY ready?. *Br J Sports Med* 2017;51:555-556.
- Forsdyke D, Smith A, Jones M, et al. Psychosocial factors associated with outcomes of sports injury rehabilitation in competitive athletes: a mixed studies systematic review. *Br J Sports Med* 2016;50:537-544.
- Heaney C, Rostron C, Walker N. Is there a link between previous exposure to sport injury psychology education and UK sport injury rehabilitation professionals' attitudes and behaviour towards sport psychology? *Physical Therapy in Sport* 2016;23:99-104.
- Mallows A, Debenham J, Walker T, et al. Association of psychological variables and outcome in tendinopathy: a systematic review. *Br J Sports Med* Published Online First: 16 November 2016. doi: 10.1136/bjsports-2016-096154.
- Wiese-Bjornstal D, Smith A, Shaffer S, Morrey A. An integrated model of response to sport injury : Psychological and sociological dynamics. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* 1998;10:46-69.